

**RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE,  
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AND HOSPITALS**

**POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

<b>TITLE:</b> Public Records Request Guidelines		<b>POLICY NO:</b> Legal # 1
<b>RESPONSIBILITY:</b> Office of Legal Counsel	<b>DATE APPROVED:</b> August 2012 <b>DATE REVISED:</b> NA	<b>PAGE(s):</b> 2

**Purpose:** The Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals (“BHDDH”) considers the confidentiality of its records a priority under federal and state laws, but recognizes the right of access to public records pursuant to the Access to Public Records Act, Rhode Island General Laws § 38-2-1, et.seq. and has written procedures regarding access to public records.

**Authority:** Rhode Island General Laws § 38-2-1, et. seq. and Rhode Island General Laws Title 40.1, Chapters 40.1-1 through Chapters 40.1-29, et. seq.

**Policy:** BHDDH adheres to the Access to Public Records Act, Rhode Island General Laws § 38-2-1, et. seq. and has instituted the following procedures for the public to obtain public records.

**Procedure:**

1. The Office of Legal Counsel is the designated public records unit for BHDDH.
2. All requests for records, documentation, and other information under the care, control, and custody of BHDDH should be submitted to the Office of Legal Counsel, 14 Harrington Road, Barry Hall First Floor, Cranston, RI 02920. To reach the Office of Legal Counsel by telephone, please call (401) 462-2324. To reach the Office of Legal Counsel by fax, please dial (401) 462-2330.
3. The regular business hours of BHDDH are 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM.
4. You are not required to provide identification or the reason you seek the information, and your right to access public records will not depend upon providing identification or reasons.

5. In order to ensure that you are provided with the public records you seek in an expeditious manner, unless you are seeking records available pursuant to the Administrative Procedures Act or other documents prepared for or readily available to the public, we ask that you complete the Public Records Request Form available in the Office of Legal Counsel, or on our website <http://www.bhddh.ri.gov> or otherwise submit your request in writing.
6. Please be advised that the Access to Public Records Act allows a public body ten (10) business days to respond, which can be extended an additional twenty (20) business days for “good cause.” We appreciate your understanding and patience.
7. If you feel that you have been denied access to public records, you have the right to file a review petition with the Department of Attorney General. You may also file a lawsuit in Superior Court.
8. BHDDH is committed to providing you with public records in an expeditious and courteous manner.